

# **Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance (ORA)**

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WASHINGTON STATE  
**Governor's Office of  
Regulatory Assistance**



# Who are we?

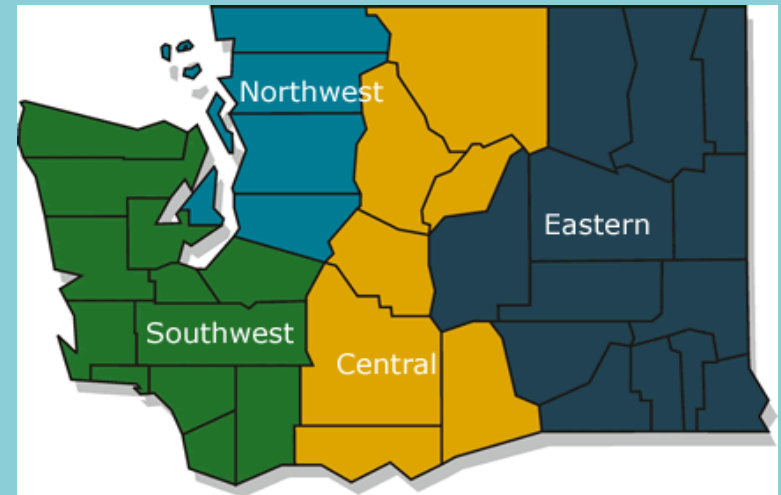
**ORA helps citizens understand environmental permitting and navigate the permitting process.**

- Customers: individuals to large companies.
- No permit authority.
- Neutral role. Do not influence permit decision.
- Free.

# Who are we?

## Two levels of service:

- Information Center.
  - 3 staff in Lacey.
  - General questions, contacts, research permit questions.
- Regional Leads.
  - 5 staff across the state.
  - Located in Ecology regional offices.
  - Coordinate and facilitate multi-agency meetings for complex and larger projects.





# Challenges for New Energy Projects

- **Unknown environmental impacts.**
  - Burden of proof on applicant to identify, evaluate, and quantify impacts.
  - Can be time consuming as well as costly, especially for first applicant.
  - Agencies reviewing project need to consider individual and cumulative impacts as well as setting precedent.
- **Challenge:**
  - Is there a better way to share information and expense of collecting data and generating studies?

# Challenges for New Energy Projects



- **Consider permitting process for Pilot Projects.**
  - Often have same permitting requirements as full scale.
  - Caveats: pilot projects may not be appropriate for all technology. Also, won't address site specific species / concerns.
  - Challenge: Can we identify appropriate, low-impact sites for testing technology under a pilot project scale?
- **New technology may not “fit” under existing regulatory structure.**
  - Want the science and the intent of the regulation to drive the permit decision.
  - Challenge: Agencies and regulations need to be nimble enough to adapt.



# Challenges for New Energy Projects

- **Coordination.**
- **Permit coordination between federal, state, and local agencies.**
  - EFSEC, FERC, federal, state, and local.
  - Can be difficult to know who does what and when.
- **Coordinating research between agencies, academic research groups, and applicants.**
  - Research and data collected with different purposes and approaches.
  - Challenge: Always a challenge. ORA, EFSEC, Commerce can help.



# Challenges for New Energy Projects

- **Managing information and data.**
  - Volume of information to manage can be considerable.
    - Research data, reports, permit information, correspondence, meeting notes, etc.
  - Before permits are submitted.
  - Dept of Energy hydrokinetic database.
  - Challenge: How do we maximize the use of technology to manage information more efficiently?

# Office of Regulatory Assistance Contacts:

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**1-800-917-0043**

**[www.ora.wa.gov](http://www.ora.wa.gov)**

**[assistance@ora.wa.gov](mailto:assistance@ora.wa.gov)**

**Anne Knapp – (509)-575-2384 or [anne.knapp@ora.wa.gov](mailto:anne.knapp@ora.wa.gov)**

**Zelma Zieman – (425)-649-7179 or [zelma.zieman@ora.wa.gov](mailto:zelma.zieman@ora.wa.gov)**